



CITY OF CHICAGO

DEPARTMENT OF LAW

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CITY OF CHICAGO SUES SOLAR PANEL COMPANY FOR OPERATING A DECEPTIVE BUSINESS THAT SCAMMED CONSUMERS

Unlawful Conduct Included Pressuring Consumers to Make Cash Deposits of more than \$10,000 for Promised Solar Installations They Never Received

CHICAGO – The City of Chicago and the Department of Law announced it has filed a [lawsuit](#) against Sun Badger Solar and its co-founders Trevor Sumner and Kristopher Sipe following an investigation that revealed the defendants induced dozens of consumers into making hefty up-front cash deposits for residential solar panel systems that Sun Badger was unable to install. In the complaint, Sun Badger is alleged to have falsely attributed installation delays to the City to prevent consumers from realizing that the company was in financial ruin and their contracted-for solar panels would never arrive.

The City seeks a judgment against Sun Badger Solar to require them to cease and desist from doing business in Chicago and to be assessed a fine for each violation of the Municipal Code, in the amount of \$10,000 for each day such violation has existed and continues to exist. The City also seeks restitution for any customer that suffered harm or financial loss due to Sun Badger’s unlawful conduct.

The lawsuit, filed in the Circuit Court of Cook County, alleges that in 2022, Sun Badger began experiencing serious financial trouble. In a desperate attempt to access cash, Sun Badger encouraged sales employees to offer significant discounts to consumers willing to pay in cash with a 50% deposit upon signing. The company misled customers into believing their solar panels would be installed in as little as four months, but the company’s financial situation meant that consumers wouldn’t see their solar panels for a year or more – if at all.

To conceal the extent of the company’s financial and logistical problems, Sun Badger employees told Chicago consumers that their installations were delayed because the Buildings Department had changed its permitting process. This was untrue – the City’s photovoltaic permitting process had not changed since the program’s inception in 2013. In reality, Sun Badger had failed to apply for the required permits to begin work.



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In February 2023, Sun Badger abruptly shut down, leaving hundreds of consumers across the Midwest without either their money or their contracted-for-solar systems.

Many of the victims who were deceived by the defendants have posted their stories on a private Facebook page titled "Sun Badger Solar Bad Reviews". This group has more than 500 members, from at least five states.

If any Chicago resident wishes to inform the City about their experience with Sun Badger Solar, they can do so by emailing consumerprotection@cityofchicago.org. The City is represented in this lawsuit by in-house counsel from the Affirmative Litigation Division in its Department of Law.

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